

el diablo fuma

(y guarda las cabezas
de los cerillos quemados
en la misma caja)

una película de **Ernesto Martínez Bucio**



MANDARINA CINE, EFICINE, EL INSTITUTO MEXICANO DE CINEMATOGRAFÍA, EL FONDO PARA LA PRODUCCIÓN CINEMATOGRAFICA DE CALIDAD PRESENTAN
EL DIABLO FUMA (Y GUARDA LAS CABEZAS DE LOS CERILLOS QUEMADOS EN LA MISMA CAJA) UNA PELÍCULA DE KAREN PLATA Y ERNESTO MARTÍNEZ BUCIO
CON MARÍAPAU BRAVO AVIÑA, RAFAEL NIETO MARTÍNEZ, REGINA ALEJANDRA, LAURA URIBE ROJAS, DONOVAN SAIDY Y CARMEN RAMOS. DISEÑADOR SONORO: JOSÉ MIGUEL ENRÍQUEZ
SUPERVISOR DE POSTPRODUCCIÓN: MARCO HERNÁNDEZ. EDITORES: ERNESTO MARTÍNEZ BUCIO, ODEI ZABALETA IMAZ Y KAREN PLATA. SEÑAL DIRECTO: ISABEL MUÑOZ COTA Y JORGE LEAL
DISTRIBUIDORA DE PRODUCCIÓN: ANA J. BELLIDO. DIRECTORA DE CASTING: MICHELLE BETANCOURT. DIRECTOR DE FOTOGRAFÍA: ODEI ZABALETA IMAZ. CO-PRODUCTORES: ERNESTO MARTÍNEZ BUCIO, ODEI
ZABALETA, KAREN PLATA. PRODUCIDA POR: CARLOS HERNÁNDEZ VÁZQUEZ, GABRIELA GAVICA MARRUFO Y ALEJANDRO DURÁN. ESCRITA POR: KAREN PLATA Y ERNESTO MARTÍNEZ BUCIO
DIRIGIDA POR: ERNESTO MARTÍNEZ BUCIO

main cast and crew

Mandarina Cine presents

THE DEVIL SMOKES (AND SAVES THE BURNT MATCHES IN THE SAME BOX)

A film by **Ernesto Martínez Bucio**

DIRECTED BY Ernesto Martínez Bucio
WRITTEN BY Karen Plata & **Ernesto** Martínez Bucio
STARRING Mariapau Bravo Aviña, Rafael Nieto Martínez,
Regina Alejandra, Laura Uribe Rojas, Donovan Said,
Carmen Ramos, Micaela Gramajo & Bernardo Gamboa

PRODUCED BY Carlos Hernández Vázquez, Gabriela Gavica
& Alejandro Durán

CINEMATOGRAPHY Odei Zabaleta

CASTING DIRECTOR Michelle Betancourt

PRODUCTION DESIGN Ana J. Bellido

EDITING Ernesto Martínez Bucio, Odei Zabaleta & Karen Plata

SOUND DESIGN José Miguel Enríquez

SOUND MIXER Isabel Muñoz Cota & Jorge Leal

info

Country: **Mexico**

Language: **Spanish**

Format: **DCP**

Aspect Ratio: **1.55:1**

Sound: **5.1**

Frame Rate: **24 fps**

Running time: **97 min**

el diablo fuma

story

el diablo f una

Mexico City, mid-90s. After the sudden disappearance of their parents, five siblings are left in the care of their grandmother. As they struggle to survive, the line between reality and something darker begins to blur. The grandmother, tormented by strange visions and rising fears, grows more distant, while the children's grip on their own perceptions starts to unravel.

Following a violent confrontation with their neighbors, the siblings retreat further into isolation, cutting them off from the outside world.



director's statement

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f uma

*There is a Chinese proverb that says,
Brush cannot write two characters with the same
stroke,
And yet
that is exactly what a good mistake does.*

Anne Carson.

This film is not one story, but many. It was born from the mind of Karen Plata several years ago. We wrote and rewrote it together a thousand times, maybe more. We explored our memories, love, fear, and the imagination of childhood. *I want to know if it's possible to make a film as if we were writing a book of poetry*, Karen said. And I thought it should look like a family photo album. We searched for lost memories. We carefully collected them and completed them with our imagination:

When I was a child, I was always afraid of the Devil, and yet I preferred to sleep close to him—he lived behind the curtains. The closet scared me more because that's where The Dead Man came from. One day, Mom and Dad left and took a long time to come back. Neither of them knew the other had left, too. At the back of the house, there was a water well. The water would be cut off at 4 PM, but we had the well. The neighbors gave us mean looks; they didn't like us, but I never knew why.

These memories are threads that knot together in shared desire, formed through sacrifice and loss. We have to lose to gain—or at least, to hold onto the hope that we might gain something.

The challenge has been to maintain the curiosity of not knowing whether this is the beginning or the end of the journey. My aim has not been to simply transfer what was written to the screen, but to transform that language, to allow the images, sounds, and bodies to take the lead. Their texture, their hardness, their fragility. To uncover, within the makeup of its own matter, its truest essence: imperfection.

During the process, I applied some kind of rules or guides:

Count the parts, never the whole. Don't reconstruct the space. Memories resemble memories, fragments glued together with imagination. Dig into the gaps. Avoid metaphor. Materialize. Deny cause-and-effect without abandoning consequence. Let things unfold. Work hard without knowing exactly why. The horizon isn't important, you just need to keep walking. Seek the honest mistake and allow it to exist. Preserve it, nurture it, and let it grow without fear. Bury fear. Play. Laugh. Cry. Dream. Find the good mistake. Fail better.

Ernesto Martínez Bucio

production note

El Diablo Fuma is the first feature film by Ernesto Martínez Bucio. His previous short films premiered at Cannes, San Sebastián, and Rotterdam. His distinctive artistic vision in this film brings us closer to sibling relationships through innocence and intimacy. He explores the formation of fears, those shared fears that take root in childhood. Fears that are passed down from generation to generation.

Ernesto has brought together a cast of children and had them captured by his cinematographer in a way that feels almost documentary-like, without sacrificing high-level cinematic storytelling. These children, who carry so much on their small shoulders and are all so different, offer a point of identification for each of us.

The film employs a raw visual language, with a handheld camera that closely follows the characters and a sharp, confident editing style. It plays with time jumps and period-specific technological elements that add texture and character. It departs from pure naturalism through its sound design and acting tone. This contrasts with the use of humor, present throughout the film, which balances between drama and comedy.

One of the greatest challenges was directing five children, most of whom had no prior acting experience. The preparation of the child actors during a specialized workshop, designed by Casting Director and Acting Coach Michelle Betancourt, was essential in achieving deep and authentic emotional states, unique moments that are not only captured on screen but also remain in the memory of the audience.

Director of Photography Odei Zabaleta, who has two previous feature films that premiered in Venice, has collaborated with Ernesto on most of his past projects. He has mastered natural lighting and camera operation. For this film, he designed a structure around the main location, a kind of cage that allowed him to filter light from the outside. This setup kept the set free of cables and rigging, creating an open space where actors could move freely without obstacles.

The 5.1 sound mix was done by Carlos Cortés, Oscar winner for *Sound of Metal*. His sensitivity ultimately shaped this film into something entirely different from what has been done in recent years in Mexican cinema.

The film's theme song, *Eres*, performed by Spanish singer Massiel, adds a nostalgic and loving tone, like a mother singing to her children from afar.

about the director

Ernesto Martínez Bucio

His mother says the doctors had to use forceps when he was born back in 1983 in Uruapan, Mexico. He is a film director, screenwriter, and editor who holds a BA in Communication Sciences from ITESO, a BA in Filmmaking from CCC, and an MA in Filmmaking from EOZE. After spending so much time studying filmmaking, one might think he learns slowly—or perhaps he just enjoys being in school. His short films have premiered at prestigious festivals, including Cannes' Cinéfondation, Cairo, San Sebastián, and Rotterdam. He has received two grants from the **National** Fund for Culture and the Arts and is an alumnus of Berlinale Talents. He loves road cycling and hamburgers.

filmography

- El Futuro (short, 2019)
- Las Razones del Mundo (short, 2016)
- La Madre (short, 2012)
- Cenizas (short, 2011)

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el diablo

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